

Read the text below and answer Questions 21–27.

How to deal with the annual performance appraisal

The annual performance appraisal can help improve your productivity and provide a foundation for your work priorities. It is, however, critical to have the right attitude and approach. Knowing what areas your superiors see as your weaknesses is the most direct way of increasing the likelihood of being considered for promotion, if that is what you are looking for.

Preparation

Send your boss a summary of your achievements. Reminding your boss of activities, special assignments you did, and projects you were in charge of helps him or her create a more accurate performance appraisal. Consider keeping notes of these on a regular basis to make it easier to provide the data when required.

Create a list of questions you would like to discuss during your appraisal. This one-on-one time with your boss is an excellent opportunity to ask him or her about your role in the company, request any additional responsibilities you would like and clarify your priorities. But it is best to focus your attention around personal and professional improvements, rather than financial considerations, such as an increase in salary.

During the appraisal

Present a positive attitude as soon as you enter the appraisal room. This approach may lead to a more constructive discussion of review items. Avoid taking any negative assessments that are offered as a personal attack, but rather try to take them on board calmly, because if you put the failings right you will improve your performance. A realistic assessment of your strengths and weaknesses can be one of the most beneficial ways of helping you advance in the company.

After the appraisal

Create a list of personal goals based on your performance appraisal. Make the items detailed and measurable if possible. Send this list to your boss so he or she knows you took the appraisal seriously. Use this list to help achieve higher scores on your next performance appraisal. Six months after the appraisal, ask for a mid-term review with your boss to discuss your progress. This session should be more relaxed and informal than the official review. Ask for more feedback to help you improve. Checking in with your boss helps him or her remember your dedication as far as your job is concerned, and may help remove any criticisms before they become a review point on your next formal appraisal.